

Remarks/Arguments

Reconsideration of this application is requested. Since this amendment merely clarifies the subject matter regarded as the invention, applicant submits that it does not raise new issues requiring further search or consideration, and may therefore be properly entered after final.

Claim Status

Claims 1, 3 and 7-17 were previously presented. By this amendment, claims 7, 8, 11, 16 and 17 are canceled, and claims 1 and 12-15 are amended. Accordingly, claims 1, 3, 9, 10 and 12-15 are now pending.

Claim Rejections – 35 US 112

Claims 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 USC 112, first and second paragraphs. In response, claims 7 and 8 are canceled.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 102 and 103

Claims 1, 3, 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by applicant's prior art Fig. 16 ("Fig. 16"). Claims 9-17 are rejected under 35 USC 103 as obvious over Fig. 16 and further in view of official notice of common knowledge in the art or engineering design choice.

In response, independent claim 1 is amended to clarify its distinction relative to Fig. 16. In particular, claim 1 now requires that

...one of the thrust fluid dynamic surfaces has a thrust dynamic pressure-generating groove which comprises a resin sliding film *having a fluid dynamic pressure-generating groove pattern shape*, formed by a transfer printing of liquid resin material thereon.

Support for this amendment is found in paragraph [0074] of the specification. The resin sliding film shown in Fig. 16 does not, by contrast, have a fluid dynamic pressure-generating groove pattern shape. A resin sliding film having such a shape is produced by a transfer printing technique, which is not disclosed in Fig. 16.

Claim 12 is amended to clarify that the capillary seal part is continuous to an interface of the fluid dynamic thrust bearing part at an outer periphery. Support for this amendment is found in paragraphs [0062] and [0063] of the specification.

Since each and every element of claim 1 is not disclosed in Fig. 16, it cannot anticipate claim 1 or claim 3 dependent thereon. The rejection of these claims under 35 USC 102 should accordingly be withdrawn. Claims 7 and 8 are canceled, rendering their rejections under 35 USC 102 moot.

Claims 9, 10 and 12-15 depend from claim 1 and distinguish over Fig. 16 for the same reason. The particular fluid dynamic pressure-generating groove pattern shape of the resin sliding film, formed by transfer printing, is not shown in Fig. 16 and is not rendered obvious by "official notice of common knowledge" or "engineering design choice". Accordingly, the rejection of these claims under 35 USC 103 should be withdrawn. Claims 11, 16 and 17 are canceled, rendering their rejections under 35 USC 103 moot.

Conclusion

This application is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is urged to telephone the undersigned to resolve any issues that remain after entry of this amendment. Any fees due with this response may be charged to our Deposit Account No. 50-1314.

Respectfully submitted,
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